

A N
A N S W E R
T O A
Letter to Mr. *Hoadly*,
E N T I T U L E D,
Faith and Obedience.

W H E R E I N

The Two Arguments from the
XIIIth. to the *Romans*, and the
Providence of God, against the
Reasonableness of Resisting Su-
preme Magistrates in any Case
whatever, are Consider'd.

L O N D O N :

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M D C C X I.

AN
ADDRESS

TO THE
FACULTY OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

IN
THE YEAR 1841

BY
JOHN RUSSELL

OF THE
FACULTY OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

PRINTED BY
JOHN RUSSELL

THE
PREFACE.

THIS Pamphlet being wrote
in Vindication of Mr. Hoad-
ly, there may be some weak enough
to imagine Him the Patron of it,
and then load Him with the Scan-
dal of every Opinion to which they
are pleas'd to give a hard Name.
In Justice to whom, I thought fit to
declare, that I have the Misfor-

The P R E F A C E.

tune to be an Absolute Stranger to Him ; and am alone Accountable for all the Faults of it. And that I should never have attempted to have said one Word in Defence of so Great a Master of Reason, had I not thought the Letter to Him beneath his Notice, and yet proper to be answer'd.

AN
ANSWER
TO A
Letter to Mr *HOADLY*,
ENTITULED,
Faith and Obedience.

HAVING lately read a Letter to Mr. *Hoably*, entituled, *Faith and Obedience*. I thought it just worth an idle Man's while, to throw away a few Hours in examining the Power of it: With no great Hopes, I confess, of convincing any Man of a contrary Opinion; but to entertain my self, and those Fortunate Men who are as unconcern'd in the World as I am.

I am

I am not a very old Fellow, and yet have read and observ'd enough of Mankind, to be convinced, that *that* Man wants not Pride nor Stupidity, who believes he can demonstrate any Proposition to be true to *One*, strongly inclined to the contrary; or can entertain himself with any rational Hopes of bringing a *stiff* Opponent to submit to what *he* calls Reason.

The Practice of the World shews the Folly of such an Expectation; for, though perhaps the same Person may think that false to *Day*, which he fondly imagin'd he could convince the World of the Truth of *Yesterday*; and that 'tis no uncommon thing to see us Mortal Men put off our Opinions with our Tempers and Circumstances in the World; yet if you tell a Man that he ought to be of your Opinion, that you have produced strong Reasons against him, much more if you endeavour to Storm him out of his *Hypothesis*; he'll do by it as the Traveller by his Cloak, when powerfully assaulted by the Wind, hold it so much the faster.

The very Arguments made use of by one against another, so proud a Creature is Man! are oft a prevailing Motive to preserve that Opinion, which had he been left to himself, and not told that he was in the wrong, he would have thrown away for their Absurdity.

Things standing thus, all I shall do is to consider the *Manner* of this Author's writing, and the *Nature and Force* of his Arguments, and leave it to every Man to divert himself with, or if he please, to judge who's in the right, *He* or Mr. *Hoadly*.

In the Introduction to this Letter, the Author, to aggrandize himself, and shew forth his wonderful Prowess, tells you his Adversary Mr. *Hoadly* is a Giant, and himself (with very great Appearance of Truth too, some say) but a Dwarf in Divinity:
That

That this new *Goliath*, though clad with a Head-piece of Brass, and Spear of Infidelity (an invifible one, I fuppofe,) and in this terrible Pofture come forth to defy the Truth; and arraign the Wifdom of God, is yet by this *Hero* of a Dwarf challeng'd to a fingle Combat.

In Page 10. To fhew that his great *Reading* is equal to his Wit, he tells us, that the Original Truth of Mr. Hoadly's System is recorded in the *Archives* of a People in *Terra Australi incognita*, for a Copy of which, Mr. Hoadly has fent a *Messenger*, &c. Much more of thefe *Academic Trifles* and this *Pedantic Wit*, you'll find difpers'd up and down the Letter; together with many beautiful Compliments, and good ftore of moft Gentleman-like *Rhetoric* beftow'd on Mr. Hoadly; as when he tells him, *he's inspir'd by the Devil*: That *he ftands upon a cloven Foot*: That *he's a Minifter of Satan*; a *Misguiding Teacher* and *blind Leader*.

Befides all this, that you may be left without Excufe, and that it may appear he has got the Victory over this *Mighty Reafoner*, (as he calls Mr. Hoadly) you have whole Pages of moft pious Declamation, with now and then a fhort Prayer to this or the like Effect, *That God of his infinite Mercy would deliver this poor People from the Contagion of that Arch-Heretic Hoadley's Doctrine*.

Sometimes you'll find the Author confounded and aftonish'd beyond Meafure, crying out in the Anguifh of his Heart, *For God's fake, Mr. Hoadly, confider what you do! Blessed God! Good God! That ever a Minifter of the Holy Gofpel fhould tell the People that they have Rights and Privileges, and ought to defend them. A Crime unpardonable!*

You'll alfo meet with Variety of very grave and wife Questions put to Mr. Hoadly: As for Example.

Sir, have you an immediate Revelation from God to contradict the Catholick Church of Chrift in fo Fundamental an Article? Or,

Reverend Sir, can you shew any Case that ever happen'd in the World, or ever is possible to happen, wherein it was or may be lawful to Resist God, by any fair Construction from the Gospel?

Ah, Mr. Querist! did you think by these cunning Questions to ensnare the good Man, and make the World judge him worthy of your *Wreath of Hemp*, prepar'd for all Teachers of Rebellion? If you did, I'm almost confident Mr. Hoadly will out-wit you, and declare to all the World that 'tis not lawful in any Case to Resist God; or at least that He that is so fool-hardy, will in all probability lose by so daring an Attempt.

He that has Patience to read this Letter through, will find that these Questions, Exclamations, Metaphors, and Allusions, (the Pride of New Writers, and Sport of Men of Sense) together with Misrepresentations of Mr. Hoadly's Meaning, absurd Sentences, a very Charitable and Christian Charge of Infidelity upon him for interpreting a Text of Scripture in such a manner as he don't like; the bare Appearance of Two Arguments, and a dark confus'd unintelligible System of his own, makes up the Sum Total of it.

Having thus taken a View of the Manner in which this Gentleman is pleas'd to write Letters, I shall now consider the Weight of what he'd fain have pass for Two Arguments.

The One is taken from *that Compendium of the Torries New Testament*, the 12th to the Romans. The other from the *Providence of God*.

He says, that the Genuine Sense of the beginning of that Chapter, is *absolute Obedience to all the Commands of Supreme Governors*, not contrary to the Laws of God; with an Obligation to suffer what Penalties they think fit to inflict upon you, for not yielding Obedience to those Commands which are directly

directly repugnant to the *Laws of God*, and the *Reason and Happiness of Men*.

Now this Tory Interpretation being so contrary to the Nature and Reason of Mankind, so directly opposite to those Provisions for our own Safety and Happiness which God himself has directed us to, and enjoyn'd us to make use of; ought to be very well secured before 'tis admitted by one that deserves the Name of a *Man*: And yet this Author don't offer one Argument to prove this to be the Sense of that Place of Scripture; but, that Obedience to Magistrates is there press'd in absolute Terms; and that a Crowd of Fathers, and *most Reverends*, and *Right Reverends*, have been, and are of this Opinion.

As to the Argument from Human Authority, it weighs nothing but with *Fools and Slaves*.

Nor is this a fair Conclusion, That because Obedience to Magistrates is express'd absolutely, therefore 'tis not lawful to Resist them in any Case whatsoever. Which I'll now endeavour to prove.

The Scriptures, though they contain the Doctrine of God, must be understood after the same Manner as all other Ancient Books are. Those Places that seem at first view to contradict the general Reason of Mankind, must be compared with others. The Occasions of those Forms of Speech must be consider'd: And such a Sense put upon them as is most for the Good of Mankind; which, whatever some Ill-natur'd Men think, is always for the Honour of God.

He that is acquainted with these Holy Writings, will find that there are variety of Places where Absolute Commands are delivered, and absolute Promises made; all which must necessarily be understood with Reasonable Limitations. Servants are commanded to obey their Masters, and *Children*

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their

their Parents in all Things. We are commanded *not to resist evil*, or the evil Man : *To swear not at all*. And yet what Man is there of common Understanding who will venture to say that Children are obliged to obey their Parents in all possible Cases ; or that we may not in some Instances resist evil, and defend our selves against Private Injuries ? Who, besides a Quaker, will say 'tis not lawful to swear before a Magistrate for a more solemn Confirmation of the Truth, tho' Christ himself has said, *Swear not at all* ? So that tho' this Text in the Romans had said, *Obey the Supreme Power on Earth in all Things, and he that resists shall receive Damnation* ; yet by a Parity of Reason, it would not have prov'd, that there might not be some Cases put, in which 'twas not lawful to obey him, or in which he might not be reasonably Resisted.

Besides this, there's one Consideration which I think will sufficiently clear the Sense of this Text ; and that is, that great Numbers of the Primitive Christians had entertain'd Two false and Enthusiastical Opinions ; one of which was, That no Subjection was due in point of Conscience to Heathen Governors. The other, That Christians were exempted from all Subjection to Human Government ; and that Obedience was due to none but God or Christ. The Truth of which seems to appear from many Places in the Scriptures. 'Tis plain the Jews had drank deep of the former Notion ; and valuing themselves upon those Privileges which were given them, not for their own sakes, but for the Benefit of the World, proudly imagin'd they ow'd Subjection to no Heathen Power. That Sect amongst them, call'd the *Herodians*, received their Name from their esteeming it lawful to yield Subjection, and pay Tribute to *Cæsar*, under whom *Herod* govern'd.

The first Christians were mostly *Jews* converted, whose Prejudices, in favour of this Doctrine, were increased by a fond Belief, that Jesus Christ their Messiah, who was risen from the dead, and ascended into Heaven, would suddenly come down again in like manner as they saw him go up, and answer those Expectations they had entertain'd of *Him*: The grand Article of which, was, That he would deliver them from *Subjection to any earthly Power*. The Truth of this appears from the History of the Acts of the Apostles, and from the Doctrine of the *Millenium's* being an universal Article of Faith for the Two first Centuries.

'Tis plain also from the Epistles, that in Virtue of this Notion, believing Husbands thought themselves released from unbelieving Wives, and believing Servants from unbelieving Masters. The Epistles of St. Peter and *Jude* inform us of a Sect of Christians, whom Dr. *Hammond* and others call *Gnostics*, who despis'd Government, and spoke evil of Dignities: And St. Peter presses them very hard, to be subject to every Ordinance of Man, whether it be to the King as Supreme, or unto Governors as to them sent by him, for rewarding well and punishing evil Doers. Where by the way 'tis worth Observation, that St. Peter commands the same Subjection to subordinate Magistrates as to the Supreme; and that he calls the Office of a King the Ordinance of Man, or a Human Institution. So far is it from being a Contradiction, (as this Author insinuates) that a King should derive his Authority from God, and the People too, that St. Paul says, *The Powers that be are ordain'd of God*; And St. Peter, *That they are ordain'd by Man*. Which Two Apostles are reconcileable thus; Kings and all other Magistrates are instituted by Man for the Preservation of the publick Happiness; which most useful Institution being agreeable to the Will

of God, and answering the Designs of his Creation, he highly approves of: So that in the Scripture Style, Magistrates are said to be ordained by Him; as frequently both in the Old and New Testament those Actions are piously attributed to God which Men do according to his Will.

Now from these Considerations of the State of Christians at that time, it appears very probable to me, that the only Reason which mov'd St. Paul to command Christians to obey Magistrates, *not only for Wrath*, but *for Conscience sake*, and for fear of receiving Damnation, that is, Judgment or Punishment from God, was, because that at Rome (as the Reverend Dean of *Carlisle* himself confesses in his *Latin Sermon* before the *London Clergy*) there were very many Christians did not believe it to be a Duty at all: But he tells them 'tis a very great one, and that God will punish them if they don't comply with it. Before I take my leave of this Thought, I can't forbear observing how exactly *our Author* falls in with those Ancient Enthusiastical Heretics, and our Modern Fifth-Monarchy Men: For *Page 21.* he has these Words, "Our Obedience then as Christians is due only to God by Faith in Christ, not to Man, by any Contract we have Power to make for our selves." How unguarded is this Expression! Have not Men a Right to make Contracts with one another? And don't all Human Justice depend almost entirely on keeping of them? But by his following Words one may make a hard shift to find out, that by Man he means his *Supreme Man*, and then the Sentence will read thus; that as Christians, our Obedience is due only to God by Faith in Christ, not to the *Supream Man* by any Contract we have Power to make. But I wish this Gentleman would offer a Reason why I mayn't make
make

make a Contract with the Supreme, and be oblig'd to keep it too.

Having thus given the Occasion of this Exhortation of the Apostle's to obey Magistrates, I shall lay before you a Paraphrase on the first 5 or 6 Verses, agreeable to it, and to what seems the natural Import of the Words themselves.

Romans XIII.

Verse 1st. *Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers; for there is no Power but of God; the Powers that be, are ordained of God.*

Verse 2d. *Whosoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive Damnation.*

Ver. 3d and 4th. *For Rulers are not a terror to good Works, but to the evil; Will you then not be afraid of the Power, do that which*
is

PARAPHRASE.

Ver. 1st. Whereas both Jewish and Gentile Christians have entertained a Notion, that Subjection is not due to any Hea-then Powers; I who have Authority from God, command you to obey Magistrates, and yield Subjection to their Laws; for the Office of a Magistrate is the Ordinance of God.

Verse 2d. Whosoever therefore resisteth these Magistrates in the Execution of their Office, resisteth the Ordinance of God, and shall receive Punishment from him.

Verse 3d and 4th. For these Governors which I command you to obey, are ordain'd for this very end, to reward Well and punish

*good, and thou shalt have
praise of the same?*

*For he is the Minister of
God to thee for good; but
if thou do that which is
evil, be afraid, for he
beareth not the Sword in
vain; for he is a Minister
of God, a Revenger to exe-
cute Wrath on him that
doth evil.*

*Verse 5th. Wherefore
you must needs be subject not
only for Wrath but for Con-
science sake.*

punish Evil Doers. Ought
not you Christians then,
whose chief Duty con-
sists in being serviceable
to one another, to be
Encouragers of this Ex-
cellent Institution? Do
you but live as Christ
your Master commanded
you, and you'll have no
Occasion to dread, but
reverence this Power,
whose Favour thereby
you'll certainly obtain:
for while you behave
your selves well, he is
the Minister of God to
defend you against the
Violence of unreasona-
ble Men; but if you do
evil, you have the same
Reason with others to
dread his Power, which
was given him by God
to discourage all manner
of Vice and Immoral-
lity,

*Verse 5th. From all
which it follows, that
you are oblig'd to obey
Magistrates, not only
for fear of being punish-
ed by them, but because
God, who has set them
up to be Guardians of
Men's Happiness, will
punish you if you don't.*

Noe,

Note, That by *Higher Powers* in Verse 1st are in all probability meant *those Persons in whom any Kingdom or State in the World has lodg'd the Right of Governing* ; or else *St. Paul* would not have enjoyn'd a Duty with the Penalty of Damnation annexed, without explaining what he meant by *Higher Powers* ; but directing his Exhortation to Christians in general, and under all sorts of Government, he knew it was not capable of any other Meaning.

It seems to me that the Interpretations which this Author has made for Mr. *Hoadly* and himself, are disagreeable to *St. Paul's* Intention, who no way concerns himself with the Matter in debate between *Whig* and *Tory* ; which appears by the Reasoning he makes use of for the enforcing the Duty of Obedience ; which is because the Magistrate is appointed for the Benefit and Security of the Subject ; but when the Reason for the Duty ceases, the Duty does likewise : For, when instead of being the Minister of God for the Temporal Good of his Subjects, (which is plainly *St. Paul's* Meaning) he does all he can to destroy it ; he is not by the Apostle's Reasoning entitled to the same Obedience. To what, but deep Prejudice, and an extreme Fondness for an Opinion right or wrong, can be attributed this kind of Reasoning, That tho' *St. Paul* exhorteth Christians to obey Magistrates who are a Terror to evil Doers, and a Praise to them that do well ; and tells them they shall receive Damnation if they resist such Magistrates, yet that he meant you should obey those, or at least not resist them, who are apparently designing and accomplishing the Ruin of the Public, and that under Pain of Damnation too. *St. Paul* Reasons from the Usefulness of the Office to Obedience : These Men from the Destructiveness of it. He shews the Unlawfulness of resisting Good Governors ; They, Bad

Bad ones. He tells us that Good Magistrates are ordain'd by God ; They, the worst of Tyrants : And, which will be a Mystery to all Ages and Generations to come, all this they prove from the same *St. Paul*.

Now if any Man after what has been said by Mr. *Hoadly* and others, and what is now offered for clearing the Meaning of this Text, shall ever have the Assurance to produce it in Proof of the Passive Doctrine, and by way of Authority say, The Powers that Be are ordained of God ; and he that resists shall receive Damnation ; 'tis my Opinion, that he ought to be esteem'd by all well-bred Persons, in the *Tatler's* Sense, *A Dead Man*.

I come now to consider his Second Argument against the Lawfulness of *Self-defence*, or *resisting Supreme Governors* in any Case whatsoever ; which is taken from the Doctrine of Providence ; and in Page 37, stands thus, " It being an irrefragable Truth, that God governs the World, and disposeth all Events, it should seem to me that God's End and Design in appointing this or that Governor over any particular Nation, is not always for the Temporal Good of that Nation, but for the fulfilling his own Will.

No Doctrine in Religion has been so mistaken by some, or so notoriously abused by others, as this of Providence. It has been made the Foundation of all the Superstitions and Enthusiasms in the World. Both Kings and Priests have in all Ages, and under all Religions, made it their grand Plea and Title to all that Tyranny, Cruelty, Inhumanity, and Barbarity, which they have thought fit to exercise upon their Fellow-Creatures, for their *own*, under the pretence of *God's sake*, who has been made the Patron of all Causes and all Parties.

The

The Ignorance of Mankind for many Ages made them an easy Prey to powerful Knaves ; but the *Commons* of *England* know too much, and have liv'd too well, to sit down content 'till their Liberties are gone.

'Tis high time for the Sons of Men to awake out of Darkness, shake off their Fetters, and live free, by setting this Doctrine of Providence (by false Notions of which they have been enslaved) in such a Light as tends most to the Honour of Almighty God, and the Good of his Creation.

The effectual way to which, is not to believe that God is the Author of any Action or Event without reasonable Proof ; or that God has commission'd any Man or Number of Men to act in his stead, 'till they have shewn their *Credentials*, as all *True Missionaries* have done.

Our Author's Conclusion, " from God's governing the World, is, that Governors are not appointed for the Temporal Good of the People, but to fulfil God's Will ". 'Tis I think mistaking the End and Design of Christianity, to imagine that God has obliged us to be *miserable here*, in order to be *happy hereafter*. Or, that he has Designs to carry on, and a Will to please distinct from the Good of his Creatures, which is what this Gentleman seems to believe.

He that reads and considers the Christian Religion as contained in the Scriptures, without any Human Inventions or Additions, can't forbear falling down before God, and adoring him as the *Common Father* of Men, for blessing the World with a System of Religion so useful and beneficial to them. There we find that nothing is recommended but such a Faith in God, and the Practice of such Virtues as naturally tend to promote the Peace and Satisfac-

on of a Man's own Mind, and the good of Communities. *Godliness hath the Promise of the Life that now is, and that which is to come, and the Meek shall inherit the Earth.* Neither are we ever obliged to suffer, but when to avoid it, we must renounce the Faith, or break thro' the Laws of Christ. Christianity (besides the Two positive Commands of Baptism and the Lord's-Supper) is nothing else but a Repetition and Enforcement of the Law of Nature; you are thereby commanded to follow whatever things are Honest, Just, Lovely, and of good Report, but what things are Just, Lovely, and of good Report, is necessarily left to the Judgment of Men. So that in Truth, the Christian Religion is only an Obligation on Men to do whatever they count reasonable, whatever they find has a natural Tendency to promote their own Happiness, and that of others, upon the Hopes of Everlasting Life, and the Fears of Everlasting Death. Neither will this, I hope, displease any Man when he considers, that the *Reason of Man* is the *Voice of God*; and that no Doctrine can be from God that contradicts it.

The Priests of the Church of Rome, have indeed, with this Author, told us Religion was made for God, by *whom* they meant *Themselves*. They have perverted the very End of Christianity, by making that Religion which was designed for the good of all Mankind, subservient to their own Interest, and the Claims of the *Spiritual Tribe*. But tho' this Gentleman happened to fall in with these Priests, his Honesty seems too great to suffer him to intend the same thing.

Having thus obviated any Objections from Revelation, I shall now endeavour to shew, that God's governing the World is not Inconsistent with the Doctrine of *Self-Defence* against any Power on Earth. In order to which I must enquire what Pro-

Providence is, or how (as far as is discernable by my Reason) God governs the World: Which must be one of these Two Ways, either in such a Manner, as that he is the immediate Author of all Actions and Events; or in such a Way as is consistent with the Liberty of Reasonable Beings, and the several Natures of those Creatures he has made. This Distinction seems not to have been considered by Mr. *Hoadly's Answerer*, who to establish the Divinity of Kings, has laid down such a Notion of Providence as destroys all Religion and Morality at once.

For, if the former of these Notions be asserted, That God is the immediate Cause of all Actions and Events, which our Author says in other Words, then this Conclusion follows, which *He, in these very Words, says is true*; '*That nothing can happen in the World, against or otherwise than by his Divine Will.*' What monstrous Absurdities attend this Position! If this be true, that nothing can happen against God's Will, resisting or not resisting Princes is all one; Faith and Infidelity, Virtue and Vice, Good and Evil, are all Accomplishments of God's Will. If this be true, why (in the Words of that Rational Objector to St. Paul) *Doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his Will?* How can resisting the Supreme, be resisting God? As this Author says, when God cannot be resisted, nor his Will opposed, as the very same Man said too; how consistently, let him judge. But upon second Thoughts I can't think 'twas the same Man but that the Pamphlet was wrote at several times by *several Hands.*

'Tis now, I think, very plain, that the meaning of this Author is, That God is the Cause of every thing that comes to pass; consequently he has set

up every Supreme Magistrate, and that to resist him is to resist God.

This being his Opinion, I think 'twas incumbent upon him, to make his Argument worth any thing, to prove that God requires such a Faith in his Providence, as that we must depend wholly upon it without the use of Rational Means; at least he ought to have prov'd, that if God did not require this of Individuals, (which is such an Absurdity as to destroy the Free Agency of Man) yet that Communities ought thus to rely upon it; nothing of which has been done by him.

The Bible and the Practice of all Nations appears against him.

The same sacred Book that obliges Persons to rely on God's Providence, obliges them as strongly to make use of those Means that conduce to their Happiness, as tho' there was no Providence at all. St. Paul himself, (as you'll find in *Acts 27th*) tho' an Angel of God stood by him, and told him that God had given him all the Souls that sail'd with him, yet thought they were not secure even with this miraculous Assurance, without using the Natural Means to preserve themselves; for when the Seamen were about to flee out of the Ship for safety, Paul said to the Centurion and Soldiers, *Except These abide in the Ship Ye can't be saved.*

But leaving Texts, I'll now pursue the Argument a little further: If all things come to pass according to God's Will, and he Directs and Orders all Events, and is the Cause of all Actions; then it follows unavoidably, that no Evil can attend any Action but what is the natural Consequent of it. Supposing God to be Wise, Good and Just, in our Sense of those Words, (without which we suppose nothing) 'tis unconceivable, that he should inflict any positive Punishment for doing those Actions which

which are agreeable to his Will, and which we could no ways avoid: There can be no such thing as Punishment in another World for *necessary* Actions *in this*; and consequently he that resists cannot receive Damnation.

Besides, by this Doctrine of Fate, God is made the Author of all Sin; neither does what this Gentleman says to vindicate God in this Matter, signify any thing: He was aware of this Difficulty, and therefore makes a Definition of Sin, the very same which that Grave Trifler *Hobbes* was forc'd to, in defending this Doctrine of Necessity against Bishop *Brambal*. And in Page 37 and 38, after *Hobbes*, he argues thus, 'God is the Cause of all Actions, but he is not the Author of Sin, because Sin is only a Consent of the Will, to transgress a known Law. That this is the Sense of his arguing in those Pages I leave to every Reader to judge. Now can't any Man of common Sense see thro' the Fallacy of this. Sin is (*here*) made to consist not in Action, but Consent or Inclination. God is supposed not the Author of our Inclinations to break his Law, but the Cause of the Act it self; Therefore he is not the Author of Sin. Excellent Reasoners! But pray, Sir, who told you, besides *Hobbes*, that Sin consisted *only* in consenting to break the Law? Is not the Act of Adultery and Murder or any other Crime, as truly Sin, as the bare Inclination, or Consent of the Will (as you call it) to commit that Action? I thought till now, that the Law says, *Thou shalt do no Murder, Thou shalt not commit Adultery, &c.* and not, *Thou shalt not consent to Murder or commit Adultery*: And that consequently Sin consisted in *doing* those Actions God had forbidden, and not doing those he has commanded: From whence it follows, If God is the Cause of all Actions, he is the Cause of Sin, because Sin is a Trans-

Transgression of the Law, and not a *Consent* to Transgress it.

I can't forget a Text that this Gentleman (whose Integrity could not preserve him from playing the Sophister) brought to prove, that Sin consists *only in Consent*; and that is, that *He that looks on a Woman to lust after her, has committed Adultery with her in his heart*: But the utmost that this proves, is, That he that would lie with another Man's Wife if 'twas in his power, had broke the Law; but not that the Sin of Adultery consisted *only* in that. What an unhappy *Reasoner* is our *Author*, never to have the good Fortune to be in the right!

Having thus shewn the absurd and dismal Consequences of the Doctrine of Fate; such Consequences as persuade *me*, that God don't so govern the World as to be the Cause of all Actions; upon which Argument alone stands our Author's tottering *Fabrick*: I can think but of one way more whereby God should Govern the World; and that is in such a manner as is consistent with the several Natures of those Creatures He has made; particularly, with the Liberty of Man; who, if He's an accountable Creature, must be free.

When I consider (from a View of the Creation) that God has all possible Wisdom, Goodness and Power; how admirably the World is built for the Pleasure of the Inhabitants! how exactly suited all the Objects that surround us, are to those Faculties He has given us! how fond we are of this Life, notwithstanding the Discovery of Immortality, and the Promise of Everlasting Bliss! I conclude, that this most Bountiful Author of all Beings, design'd us for no other End than to be happy, *even in this life*; and that He has given us Wisdom to find out, and
Power

Power to make use of all those Means that conduce towards it.

When I consider also that Men are generally happy or miserable, according as they use these Powers God has given them, and not by a bare Dependence on His Providence; I conclude, that the true State of the Case about God's Governing the World, is this:

That *He* has provided for our Happiness in this World, by putting within our reach whatever is necessary and convenient for us. That having made us in his own Image, and given us *Understanding, Liberty, and Power*, He has left the Affairs of the World in general to be manag'd and dispos'd of by Men: That they who behave themselves well, make a just Use of their Liberty, and employ those Powers God has given them, in carrying on the Design of the Creation, by promoting their own Happiness, and that of others, shall at the last Day rise to Everlasting Life; but those who act contrary to the Laws of Reason, and those Discoveries God has made of Himself, shall rise to Everlasting Death.

Thus has God provided for the Moral as well as Natural World, by good Laws and strong Sanctions.

Besides this stated *Provision*, 'tis reasonable also to believe, that this Infinitely good *Being* has, and may, whenever He thinks fit, *Interpose* in behalf of *Particular Men*, or *Bodies of Men*, at such a Juncture, when thro' the practice of Vice and Immorality they are brought into such a Calamitous State, that they can hardly subsist without some *Miraculous* Turn of Affairs.

This Notion of Providence consists very well with the Doctrine of *Self-Defence*, from which Notion, and the Premises before laid down and prov'd, that God allows and commands particular Persons

to make use of all reasonable Methods to preserve themselves against the Unjust Power of any Man ; And from this Consideration, That He is pleased we should avert those Evils that seem to come more immediately from Himself ; as, Plagues, Famines, and the like : I argue thus, That God also allows *Societies* of Men to *Defend* their Persons and Properties against the Attempts of Supreme Magistrates. I think the Argument concludes stronger in behalf of Communities, in as much as the Happiness of Thousands is preferable to that of a single Person.

Our Author no-where pretends to argue against this; but says, God has absolutely commanded you not to resist the Supreme; which Argument from 13th to the *Romans*, has been fully answer'd before.

He says also, that God will provide for us, if we suffer our selves to be ruined. But when or where did God make that Promise? 'Tis said indeed, *Cast all your Care upon God, and take no Thought for to-morrow*. But if we'll interpret these Texts like Men, the meaning can only be, After you have perform'd your Duty, be not anxious about the Event; leave the Issue to your Heavenly Father, who will do Justice to all Men; and one time or other will make all those things appear regular and beautiful, that now seem disordered and confused.

God indeed, in Mercy, may assist a voluntarily ruin'd People; but if we take a View of the World, it don't appear to be his Method: He that looks in to the Arbitrary Governments in *Europe*, informs himself of the Present State of *France*, *Denmark*, and *Sweden*; reads the Abbot of *Vertat's* History of *Sweden*, the Bishop of *Bristol's* Account of it, and that most admirable Letter wrote to Sir *J. B.* shewing the deplorable and wretched Condition that the

Doctrine

Doctrine of Absolute, Uncontrollable Power in Princes has brought that Kingdom to, will find that God do's not always think fit to do what this Author assures us He will ; that is, help those that won't help themselves.

When any Man has given himself time to consider the past and present State of Absolute Monarchies, let him then judge how desirable such a *Theocracy* as this Author dreams of, would be. Whether the being subjected to Absolute Will and Pleasure, is to be preferred to a Rational Use of our Liberty? Whether being Masters of Estates and Wealth, and consequently of most of the Comforts of Life, are of little Worth, in comparison of Oppression and Misery? Whether profound Ignorance, even to Stupidity, so far as for the *Priests to drink God Almighty's Health*, be not to be preferred to a Rational Worshipping the Deity, and the Improvements of our Minds by Science? No doubt of it, because there, a Bishop or Presbyter may advance any Notion, tho' never so absurd, without fear of having the trouble to defend it: For the Laity have nothing to do, but to believe as the Church believes. These are the Natural Effects of the Loss of Liberty; and yet our Author says 'tis Impiety; and shews the height of Infidelity in Mr. *Hoadly*, to assert 'tis Lawful in some Cases to resist Princes: For if we did but Trust in the Providence of God, these may not be the fatal Consequences. But why so strong a Faith so ill grounded? Do not Facts give Sanction to Mr. *Hoadly's* Reasoning? Hath God interposed in behalf of these Communities, more than in the Case of Individuals? Faith in God's Providence is, no doubt, highly commendable, and so is Zeal in his Service; yet both may become unreasonable: And Faith, without Rational Grounds of Assent, is only rash

Credulity, which seems to be the Faith this Gentleman recommends.

Having thus performed what I promised, and considered the Force of this Author's Arguments; it seems reasonable to me to conclude, That Mr. *Hoadly's* Doctrine concerning the Lawfulness of *Self-defence*, stands unmoved, notwithstanding what has been said against it, either from the 13th to the *Romans*, or the Providence of God.

But before I have done with this Letter, I beg leave to make a few Remarks upon some of the Absurd Sentences contained in it.

In Page 23d, the Author speaks thro' a newly converted Heathen, who discerned the Truth as the half-cured Blind Man in the Gospel saw Men, as Trees, walking: For He says, "Neither the Prince nor Subject has any Right but what God gave them. By the same way of Reasoning, I may say, A Man has no Right to his Estate, to any Office, Employment or Trade, or to any thing he possesses, but what God gave him. But is not this egregious Trifling? For God cannot be said to be the Author of any thing, or to give a Man a Right to any thing, but in the same Sense that Men give Right to one another; that is, when He interposes by his Power to *do* that, which otherwise would not have been effected: But when He *do's so* Interpose, we can never be sure, *without a Miracle*.

In Page 26. He says, "If all Christians would Practice the Duties of Christianity, then *Theocracy* would be restored, and none of those Evils would come upon us, as is imagin'd, by submitting to the Will of the most Arbitrary Prince. Ay, then indeed would the long-look'd-for *Milennium* be come; but then, Sir, we should stand in

no

no need of Governors nor Laws. The Office of Priest and King would then be useless, for we should be *all Kings and Priests to God*: Then would the *New Jerusalem* be come down from Heaven; and Light, and Life, and Love, would so fully possess every Soul, that in all Faces would appear the warmest Desires to Bless and Please, to Unite and be Happy. The Prospect of this *Elizium*, this New Heaven and New Earth, fills me with so much Joy, that I feel my self beyond Description, and unable to tell you any more of the Properties of this Imaginary Paradise. But methinks I long to be there; and can't forbear crying out with the Good Old Man in *Cicero*, *O Præclarum diem, &c.* O happy Day, when I shall be deliver'd from this miserable World, and, in the Scripture - stile, *Assemble with the Spirits of these Just Men made perfect.*

In Page 34, He finds fault with Mr. *Hoadly* for saying the Q —, encouraged by Her Example the Glorious Design of the Revolution; and asks what Example did She give? And then tells Mr. *Hoadly*, “ He believes Her M — y has been guided by “ a more enlightning Ray of God's Grace, than “ to countenance such a prophane Doctrine [as Resistance at the Revolution.]”

The Example Her M — y gave in that Con-
juncture, was Her going to *Oxford* with the Bishop
of *London*, to meet the Prince of *Orange*; and 'tis
notorious to all the World, that by all Her future
Actions, She did encourage that Glorious Design.
So that 'tis plain, notwithstanding the enlightning
Ray of God's Grace, which this Gentleman attri-
butes to the Queen, it did not hinder Her M — y
from Resisting the Power, which then acted ille-
gally: For Her Departing from the Court of King
James, and Joyning the Prince of *Orange*, was as

truly Resistance as Inviting the Prince over, or actually Fighting in his Cause.

In Page 39, The Author shews himself a mighty Champion against the *Manichees*; and rather than assign the true Cause of the Origin of Evil, which would destroy his own Scheme, gives none at all; For after half a Page of Railing Accusation against the Devil (what *Michael* the Archangel did not think fit to do,) He tells us very gravely, that Evil came from the Devil; but a *Manichee* would ask how the Devil, who was produced immediately by God, came to have Evil Inclinations; which I leave him to Answer when he thinks fit.

In Page 47, and 48, He labours to prove, that by *Higher Powers*, St. Paul meant the Emperor of Rome; and asks, "Whether the Spirit of God did not know who was *then* Emperor; and who would be his Successors? Yes; but the Spirit of God did not tell every thing He knew to the Persons He inspired; for if so, they would have known all things. But what signifies it? Whether St. Paul knew it, or no; or whether he press'd Obedience to *Nero* or *Caligula*: Mr. Hoadly never said that Personal Vices incapacitated a Prince for Government, or was a just Plea for Resistance, nor yet the receiving of Private Injuries.

Nero and *Caligula* might be Monsters of Wickedness, and might sometimes make sport with the Lives and Properties of some of their Subjects, and yet, in the general, Justice might be so well administered, and the Persons and Properties of the Subjects so well secured, as would have made it unreasonable in the Community to have overturned the Government; or in St. Paul, to have bid the Christian Subjects resist them in the Execution of their Office. How close do some Men shut their Eyes against the Light! And having Eyes, see not, and Ears

Ears hear not? Has not Mr. *Hoadly* told you several times over, that nothing can make Resistance reasonable, but an apparent Attempt to ruin the Publick? The pursuing such Measures as every Man feels will end in Universal Destruction.

In Page 39, he says, the Power that *Nero* and *Caligula* exercised over all their Subjects was *Just* Power. First prove that God commissioned them to exercise that Barbarity and Cruelty they were guilty of to some of their Subjects, and I'll grant it: Otherwise, you may with as good a Grace say, that a Rogue is an Honest Man, that Vice is Virtue, that Light is Darkness, or that 2 and 2 are Seven.

In Page 51. He asks, Do the Laws of the Land disallow all Resistance against the least Bailiff or Catchpole in the Land, and can they allow it against the Person or Power of the *Queen*? What's this to the Purpose? Did Mr. *Hoadly*, or any Man of tolerable Sense ever say, that the Laws of the Realm allowed Subjects to resist their Prince? *K. Charles I.* indeed says, that the Law is the Measure of the Princes Prerogative; and the Archb. of *Y*— says, the Laws are the Measure of the People's Submission; and I say, from them both, that I can't be obliged by Law to obey those Commands that are contrary to the Law. But Mr. *Hoadly's* Argument has nothing to do with the Laws of the Land, but turns upon the Reasonableness of Self-Defence antecedent to, and abstract from all Considerations of Laws; and proves the Reasonableness of Defending ones Person and Property which the Laws are design'd to secure, against the Violaters of either of them.

In Page 53 He says, that every Man's best Title to what he has, is the Power of her Majesty over us; for take the *Queen's* Power away, and the Laws are *no more than a Dead Letter*. Which amounts

mounts to no more than this; Laws are no Security to us, unless they are put in Execution. A rare Discovery!

In Page 58. He says, he must ever believe 'twas the Hand of God, and not the Arm of Flesh, that brought about the Revolution. Pray, Sir, give me a Reason for your Faith, and I'll believe too.

In Page 33. He tells us the Prince of Orange had a Reversionary Claim in Right of the Princess his Consort, to the Scepter of these Kingdoms.

The Gentlemen of the Middle-Temple humbly desire a Proof of that.

Page the 55th furnishes us with a very profound Question, thus gravely put; Is it for the good of the Community to have a Government! and can it be for their Good to resist him too? Such a Difficulty as this must surely have given me a great deal of Trouble to remove it, had not the following Proverbial Saying came to my Relief, *viz. Fire and Water are good Servants, but bad Masters.* I immediately thought, that though it contain'd fewer Words than the Question, yet that it amounted to a compleat Answer; and as such, I think, I may safely leave it with my Readers, without the Supposition of their being Enigmatists.

The Postscript betrays a Spirit of Fear, beneath the Character of the Author.

He says, some may possibly tell him, In a limited Monarchy, as this is, to allow an irresistible Power in the Queen, is to set up Prerogative above Law, and destroy our Constitution.

Some may tell you so indeed, and I am one of those; for he that asserts an absolute uncontrollable Power in Princes does by Natural Consequence set up Prerogative above Law. For suppose the Supreme claims (as King *James* lately did) a dispensing Power, and procures a Pack of Mercenary Judges to declare that he had a Right to do it; suppose

pose he nulls all the Laws, and governs by his own Will and Pleasure, what Remedy have we but Prayers and Tears?

We can't resist then, in the Sense in which you hold we may, that is, if we are wrong'd, have recourse to the Law; there being no Law to fly to. This I think is to destroy our Constitution. But you declare you mean no such thing. You know your own meaning best: But since the Power of discerning Spirits is ceased, we can know your Mind only by those Signs you are pleased to give us. You say your Design is only to vindicate the Prerogative as 'tis by Law, and the Laws as Prerogative has made them.

If by Prerogative you mean the Power of the King exclusive of the States in Parliament, every Body knows that such a Prerogative can make no Laws.

I'm now quite tired with remarking on this Letter, therefore shall conclude all, with declaring, That the Author of it with all his Faults and Imperfections on his Head, is a Gentleman and an Orthodox Christian. His Birth and Estate give him a Title to the *former*, and his being of *the Opinion* in Fashion to the *latter*; and that if, upon reading this Answer, he thinks there's Argument enough to move him to honour it with a Reply, it shall be treated with all that Respect and Deference, which is due to the it, and the Hand it comes from.

So great is my Esteem for *Religion and Loyalty*, which are what this Gentleman so earnestly contends for, that I think when they are established on their *Natural Foundations*, they are the most valuable things in the World, and that without the Practice of 'em, Imagination could not reach the Misery of Human Life: But as *these* are of the highest Importance and greatest Use to Mankind, *when rightly understood*

derstood, so nothing can be more fatal to us than *wrong Notions* about 'em. 'Tis to *these* I impute all the *Indecencies* in this Gentleman's Letter, and that heavy Censure he has past on one of the *best Defenders* of *Primitive Episcopacy* and *English Liberty*, that ever appear'd in the World.

To set him right in this Matter, and give him just Notions of his Behaviour towards God and his Prince, I wish he would give himself the Trouble of reading once more Mr. *Hoadly's* Sermon, and that Rational and Christian Defence of it he has made against the Right Reverend the Bishop of *Exeter*, and the Reverend the Dean of *Carlisle*: That he would read his late Volume of Sermons, and behold the Conformity of the *Author's Life*, to the *Divine Precepts* of his Master: Then should I be tempted to think, that the Abatement of this Gentleman's Zeal would make way for the Return of such Cool and *Just Thoughts*, that *this* excellent Divine would no more be in danger of being publicly stiled no Minister of the Gospel; but that he would for ever sit better, even in *this* Gentleman's Esteem; then I should be in hopes that *his Understanding* would be enlightened to that Degree; that his Veneration for his Prince would no more make him forget he was a Christian; nor his Zeal for Religion, that he was a Gentleman. But that he would be so fully possessed of Modesty, Humility and Submission to Spiritual Guides, that he would always remember, what Sir *William* once said, That *Sufficiency* is the worst Composition that ever was made out of the Pride and Ignorance of Mankind.

F I N I S